

I wish to call the Senate's attention today to a similar situation. For \$13 million, we could help prevent hundreds of millions of dollars in losses from forest fires.

This case involves a Federal program which can help detect wild fires and volcanic activity from space. It is a small program that has been in a pilot phase for a couple of years but which is now operational. Except it is not operating. It stopped when funding for it ended on September 30, 2000. Unfortunately, funds to keep it going have not been authorized or appropriated for the next fiscal year.

The program, which only recently came to my attention, is called the Hazard Support System. It is operated by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and is a forceful example of how today's modern technologies can be employed to the benefit of us all.

For several years, our fire and volcanic agencies have been working with the Department of Defense to realize the potential dual use of the nation's ballistic missile warning satellites to argument existing fire detection and suppression capabilities and to monitor global volcanic activity.

We have heard a great deal about fires over the past few months. On average there about 100,000 wildland fires in the United States each year, destroying millions of acres of timber, rangeland, and homes at the cost of hundred of millions of dollars. In 1994, federal fire suppression cost \$920 million.

Here is a system—the Hazard Support System—which can detect fires of less than a quarter acre in size and dispatch warnings via the Internet to fire fighters in five minutes, saving potentially millions of dollars—not to mention people's homes—and it is not being funded.

The system's utility is not limited to forest fires but also can be used to detect volcanic eruptions and to track ash clouds.

One can ask why should we care about tracking ash clouds?

Imagine cruising through an ash cloud in a airplane at 30,000 feet above Alaska: volcanic ash is sucked into the jet's engines where it instantly melts, coating the inside of the engines, cutting off the flow of oxygen, and causing the engines to stall. The plane drops to 10,000 feet where the engines restart only because the rapid descent has dislodged the ash crust. This actually happened to an aircraft in Alaska.

Jet radars and weather satellites cannot detect ash clouds. To these systems, ash looks like water vapor. With ash from volcanic explosions traveling around the world at high altitudes, we cannot fly safely unless we have the ability to track these clouds. Every year about 10 volcanic eruptions penetrate the altitude range of air traffic. Seven passenger airliners have experi-

enced engine power losses, and plane repair and replacement costs, as of 1994, exceeded \$200 million.

Most of the world's volcanoes can erupt without warning. There is no global volcano monitoring capability. Currently, less than half of America's 65 potentially active volcanoes are monitored for signs of activity—but not their ash clouds. We have active volcanoes in Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, and Hawaii. Most of the volcanoes in the Aleutian Islands are active but, along this major international airline route, only 10 percent of these volcanoes are monitored. Only 10 percent of the world's 1,500 potentially active volcanoes are under constant surveillance.

The USGS' Hazard Support System fuses the fire- and volcanic-activity detection capabilities of the world's environmental weather satellites with that of our ballistic missile warning satellites—without affecting their primary national security mission—to provide 24-hour worldwide detection.

The cost of this system for its first year would be \$13.5 million and \$5 million thereafter. The benefits of this program for states in the Western part of the United States are obvious. I have been assured by the Administration that the only reason funding for this program was not requested for the next fiscal year was because, at the time of the budget preparation, the system was not yet operational. It is now operational and proven.

I intend to seek funding for a small program with a huge return in protecting Americans from future forest fires and the danger of catastrophic airline crashes. I would urge my colleagues to join me in support of this program.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and I can think of no better way to start off the month than by reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act and providing thousands of South Dakota women and children with the resources and protection from violence and abuse.

As you know, programs contained in the Violence Against Women Act expired October 1. I have sponsored legislation to reauthorize and expand these important programs, and the reauthorization bill has received broad, bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. In fact, there are 72 Senators cosponsoring my bill. Also, the House of Representatives voted last week by an overwhelming 415-3 margin to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.

This Congress, that has failed to act on several important legislative initiatives, has the opportunity to do something right this week. Majority Leader

LOTT can schedule votes today on reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, and it would pass overwhelmingly. The President has promised to sign the bill as soon as possible. The time to act is now.

In South Dakota alone, approximately 15,000 victims of domestic violence were provided assistance last year. Shelters, victims' service providers, and counseling centers in South Dakota rely heavily on these funds to provide assistance to these women and children. Reauthorization of this legislation assures that South Dakota communities will continue to have access to critical funds for domestic violence services.

A woman from South Dakota recently wrote me about this issue, and I shared her story on the Senate floor last week because I believe it made the most compelling case for reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. This South Dakotan was abused as a child, raped as a teenager, and emotionally abused as a wife. Her grandchildren were also abused. In her letter, she pleads: Please reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. Don't let another woman go through what I went through, and please don't let another child go through what my grandchildren have gone through. You can make a difference."

I also heard from a Rural Outreach Advocate in South Dakota who said a grant from the Violence Against Women Act enables her and other advocates to help battered women in our state. She noted that many assaulted women and children in our state live in remote, rural areas that don't have available services. Without grants from the Violence Against Women Act, this Rural Outreach Advocate warned that we will be unable to help a majority of battered women and children on our state's farms and in our state's small towns.

In addition to the need to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act, I recently joined Senator PAUL WELLSTONE of Minnesota in introducing legislation called the National Domestic Violence Hotline Enhancement Act. Since 1994, the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE) has received 500,000 calls from women and children in danger from abuse. My legislation would create the National First Call for Safety web site that would allow National Domestic Violence Hotline operators to quickly and easily find the most appropriate shelter for callers. The highly secure and confidential web site would keep a continuously updated, nationwide list of available shelters and information about services and facilities offered by these shelters.

My legislation is modeled after the successful Day One program in Minnesota. Day One has run a web site linking every shelter in Minnesota and reports that 99 percent of women and